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1723

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Yousuke Yamada  
Serial No. : 09/931,973  
Filed : August 17, 2001  
Title : FILTER DEVICE

Art Unit : 1723  
Examiner : Krishnan S. Menon

**MAIL STOP AF**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REPLY TO ACTION OF AUGUST 19, 2004

In reply to the Final Office Action of August 19, 2004, Applicant submits the following remarks.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9-11, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patent Abstract of Japan JP-07-060074 (the '074 reference) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,156,200 (Zha et al.). Applicant respectfully disagrees with those rejections.

Enclosed with this Reply is an English-language translation of the '074 reference. Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider the claim rejections in light of the complete translation and the comments that follow.

The '074 reference discloses a hollow fiber membrane module with a housing 6 and a plurality of hollow fiber membranes 7 inside the housing. Each hollow fiber membrane 7 is fixed by a fixative resin 8. (*See* page 2, lines 16 – 19 of the translation) A raw fluid inlet port 1 is provided, as is a gas supply inlet 4.

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I hereby certify under 37 CFR §1.8(a) that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage on the date indicated below and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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